

**COMMUNITY EDUCATION & RECREATION
JOINT POWERS BOARD
JUNE 24, 2016**

Members Present: Dave Baumgart, Bill Borth, Sally Calvin, Matt Dawson, Tim Johnson, Carol Laumer, Audrey Nelsen, Pablo Obregon, Rachel Skretvedt, Darin Strand

Staff Present: Steve Brisendine, Rob Baumgarn, Casey Hagert, Ryan Harper, City Administrator Larry Kruse, Public Works Superintendent Scott Ledeboer, Becky Sorenson, Pam Vruwink

Others Present: Richard Engan, Ben Atchison, Dawn Engstrom – Engan Associates
Ben Hooper – Eagle Creek

Chairman Darin Strand called the meeting to order. He called on Ben Hooper from Eagle Creek who presented their request for a liquor permit for Willmar Fests at Robbins Island. A motion was made by Carol Laumer to approve the request. Dave Baumgart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was Rice Park. Richard Engan handed out a set of drawings for the proposed Rice Park plan. The work will be done on the west section of the park, not the east, leaving the existing playground as is.

Richard introduced Dawn Engstrom who talked about adding additional space so restrooms and change rooms are not in the same room. Rachel Skretvedt agreed, saying that, as a parent with small children, sometimes they need the restroom immediately and can't wait until someone finishes changing. Sally Calvin also agreed that the addition of a separate change area would be a good idea. It was also stated that hooks and some shelves need to be added so people don't have to put their things on the floor. It was also mentioned adding a toilet to the change room. Richard stated that he would look into State Code to see what the requirements are with regards to restrooms.

Darin Strand asked about the proposed shading of the plaza. Richard stated two plans have been discussed – a permanent structure and a sails structure. Richard reported that the material used in the sails are extremely durable and should not need to be frequently replaced. The cost would be less expensive if smaller sails were purchased. Richard Engan said he has not priced them out yet. Sally Calvin asked if they would be permanent or taken down during the winter. Richard said he assumed they would be taken down for the winter.

A discussion followed regarding the open shelter with an enclosed section. There were three drawings for the proposed shelter – two traditional shelters – one with regular windows and one with two glass garage doors and one contemporary shelter. The size of the storage room was talked about, how much space is needed. If the change rooms are added, the needed space for those will have to come from somewhere such as decreasing the size of the storage room or making restrooms smaller.

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Having one restroom and adding toilets to two change rooms was mentioned. Rachel Skretvedt asked about non-slip floors. Richard responded that is a consideration.

Samples of the possible brick outside for the shelter were passed around.

Darin Strand summarized the discussion so far.

Three restrooms or two restrooms and one change room

Doors facing the splash pad and a possible garage door to open enclosure up

Shade

The possible garage doors for the shelter are more expensive than windows. Rachel Skretvedt asked about replacing glass in the door if any of the sections are broken. Richard Engan responded that the glass is a tempered and more difficult to break but since the garage door is made of glass sections, not one section, replacement glass sections are available.

After much discussion, the Board directed Richard Engan and Engan Associates to proceed with developing a plan for the traditional shelter with two restrooms and one change room, doors facing the splash pad and to come back with prices for a shelter with windows and what the extra cost for the garage doors would be.

The next item on the agenda was the local option sales tax. The City Council has approved that the question could be put on the ballot.

Matt Dawson talked about the survey. Pablo Obregon asked how we convince people to support the local option sales tax. He wants to make sure the proposed Community Center is accessible to everyone. Matt said location doesn't matter. It will be out of the way for some people no matter where it is located. Possibly the bike trail could be connected to the Civic Center Arena, MN West and Robbins Island.

There have been numerous requests for an indoor playground (which was removed from the City Auditorium during the maintenance and cleaning work done a couple of years ago). Another request is for indoor soccer space. What is a community center and what amenities should be in a facility like this is the question that needs to become clearer.

Carol Laumer talked about the need to have space for the senior population as that is the fastest growing segment of the community. Their needs will need to become known so this structure has proper input from the users.

Rachel Skretvedt asked Steve what he thought about offices being at the new Community Center. Steve responded that as things may possibly be changing with the construction of the new elementary school and early childhood classes being placed in each of the elementary schools, he is not sure how that will affect Jefferson Learning Center and the possible relocation of CER staff.

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A question was asked how the City Council feels about the items included on the proposed local option sales tax. Tim Johnson responded that he wants to see some cost figures. If the sales tax option passed, it will presumably free up money. He is interested in knowing how much money. The amount of money that could be raised by the sales tax option is \$2.2 million per year.

City Administrator Larry Kruse talked about the CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) for the next 5 years. One and half million is projected for Robbins Island this year with a total of 4 million for 5 years. For the Civic Center Arena, \$3,600,000 for updates, including new refrigeration. For Swansson Field updates another \$2,250,000 is needed. This totals close to \$10 million, leaving a little over \$1 million left from the money raised by the local option sales tax. Does the City Council plan on spending \$20 million to do some extra things or \$10 million to get caught up?

Tim Johnson stated that he is concerned with the tax base. Darin Strand said he thinks that if things are not done, people will not stay in Willmar. Rachel Skretvedt said that we keep saying that Willmar is a regional center but we are not or Willmar does not have many of the amenities of other regional centers around the state. We need to do things to become a regional center and not only keep people in Willmar but entice people to move to Willmar. A plan needs to be defined; we can't come up with a cost estimate without having a plan.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be July 22.